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360Zine

Issue 15 | February 2008

Free Magazine For Xbox 360 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

TURNING POINT: FALL OF LIBERTY

Take to the streets of Nazi America

PREVIEWED
**CONFLICT:
DENIED OPS**
Latest in the series

PREVIEWED
**VIKING: BATTLE
FOR ASGARD**
Gory good fun

PREVIEWED
GTA IV
All the latest info

MASSES MORE



1 BEAUTIFUL KATAMARI
Wonderfully wacky



2 JUMPER
Griffin's Story



3 THE CLUB
Killing with kudos

PLUS LOADS MORE!



CONTROL →





Welcome to 360Zine



An exciting issue awaits, not just because of the latest GTA IV news, but also because this very issue that bedecks your screen right now represents "v.2" of 360Zine, with new video options, sharing facilities and much more.

On the games front, Soul Calibur IV has caught our attention this month with the news that none other than the mighty Yoda is to take his place in the ring. Turning Point: Fall of Liberty is also shaping up for an imminent release so we caught up with senior producer Dave Brickley about this fascinating new FPS. Don't miss our exclusive interview starting on page 15.

As for reviews - it's 'that time of the year' so there's not a hell of a lot to play with, but we managed to get first dibs on Bizarre Creations' The Club and also bagged a look at the weird and the wonderful Beautiful Katamari.

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
360zine@gamerzines.com

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the new issue.

**MEET THE
TEAM**
Probably the best
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the planet



Kieron Gillen
See what Kieron makes of Bizarre Creations' The Club.



Ian Morris
Ian celebrates XBLA's 100th birthday. Bless.



Chris Schilling
Beautiful Katamari took the Schilling's fancy this month.

Don't miss! *This month's top highlights*



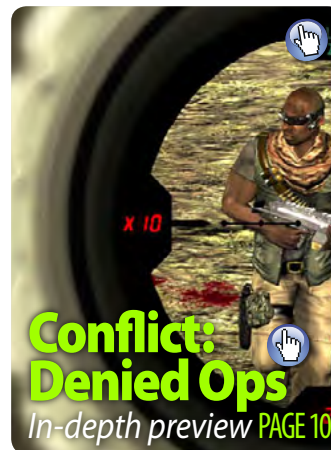
TURNING POINT: FALL OF LIBERTY

IT'S NAZI AMERICA PAGE 15



Beautiful Katamari

Reviewed PAGE 19



Conflict: Denied Ops

In-depth preview PAGE 10



GTA IV

Only a few
weeks to
wait...

PAGE 3

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

GTA IV	White Gold: War In
Command & Conquer 3	Paradise
Soul Calibur IV	Conflict: Denied Ops
Jumper	Viking: Battle for
Lost Odyssey	Asgard
Iron Man	Turning Point: Fall of
Top Spin 3	Liberty
Far Cry 2	Beautiful Katamari
Rainbow Six Vegas 2	The Club
	XBLA

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WARNING! MULTIMEDIA DISABLED!

If you are reading this, then you didn't choose "Play" when Adobe Reader asked you about multimedia when you opened the magazine.

Without the multimedia playing, the magazine will look correct, but you will be missing out on all of the extra content built into each issue, like videos, animated screenshots, annotations, quizzes, competitions and more.

We recommend you close and re-open the magazine and select "Play" when asked about the multimedia to enjoy the magazine as intended.





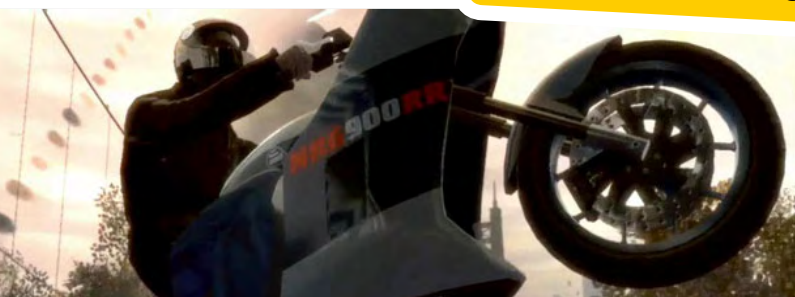
Publisher: Rockstar Games
Developer: Rockstar North
Heritage: GTA series, Manhunt
Link: <http://www.rockstargames.com/IV/>
ETA: 29th April 2008



While Nico might have wanted to escape his criminal past, it's clear he'll have to get his hands dirty in America.

"Set for worldwide release in just over two months' time"

A new physics engine, Euphoria, brings a more realistic feel to car movement, making chases feel even more real.



There's a much more cinematic approach to everything, with quick-time events enlivening the action.



It wouldn't be GTA without some sparkling dialogue, and we've already heard some snappy one-liners from a smooth-talking Niko.



FIRST LOOK

Grand Theft Auto IV

It's Niko time...

What's the story?

29th April 2008. If you've not already marked that date in your diary, then do so immediately. Because that's when we're finally getting the next game in one of gaming's biggest and best franchises. Yes, Grand Theft Auto IV is set for a simultaneous worldwide release in just over two months' time.

What do we know?

A lot more than the fairly cryptic first two trailers gave away, that's for sure. Perhaps the biggest problem with the series in the past is that its basic shooting mechanics haven't had the same level of polish applied to the plot, dialogue, driving mechanics...well, pretty much every other factor, really. This time, as we've already heard, things will be different. There's a Gears of War-esque third-person aiming style and cover system, while you can lock on to individual enemies, then fine tune your aim for a headshot - or a kneecapping if you'd rather immobilise than kill. That's not the only new tidbit of info, either - your phone is your friend here, with a variety of functions from reporting crimes, through chatting to friends to improve personal relationships (for free rides and other assistance), to listening to music as you do your dirty work.

When do we get more?

Very soon. With any luck, we should have some more info in the next couple of issues of 360Zine.

Anything else to declare?

One controversy-baiting touch is the ability to get seriously drunk. Drive home in this state, and should you make it back in one piece, you'll gain more respect. Paging the Daily Mail...

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of GTA IV





COMMAND & CONQUER
KANE'S WRATH

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA LA
Heritage: Medal of Honor
Frontline, Lord Of The Rings:
BFME II
Link: [http://www.
commandandconquer.com/](http://www.commandandconquer.com/)
ETA: Spring 2008



Command and Conquer 3 was just the right sort of strategy game for the 360 - not too complex, but rarely over-simplified.

"A brand new story that spans a whopping two decades"



The game unapologetically wears its influences on its sleeve - there's more than a hint of Star Wars about certain units.

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to tell us what you think of Kane's Wrath



This sums up what the franchise has always been about - fierce combat and huge explosions. It's quite the looker for a strategy game.



FIRST LOOK

Command & Conquer 3: Kane's Wrath

It's Nod over yet

What's the story?

Megalomaniac Kane and his Brotherhood of Nod return to wreak more havoc in a brand new Command and Conquer story that spans a whopping two decades. Good job the whole game's not in real time, then. Taking in the Brotherhood's renaissance between the second and third Tiberium wars, the live-action story sequences for which the series is renowned will feature Natasha Henstridge (Species) and Carl Lumbly (Alias). Expect your typically high EA production values.

What do we know?

Well, this being an expansion pack, we're not sure it'll venture too far from the accessible strategic gameplay of the third game in the series - though an array of new units have been added. To add further complexities there are now six new sub-factions, bolstered by extra structures and new powers. Perhaps more importantly, the 360 version's controls are going to be made a whole lot easier, with a brand new interface which utilises the analogue stick cleverly to make snap decisions and precise commands more immediate.

When do we get more?

It's been pencilled in for a Spring release date, so sometime around Easter.

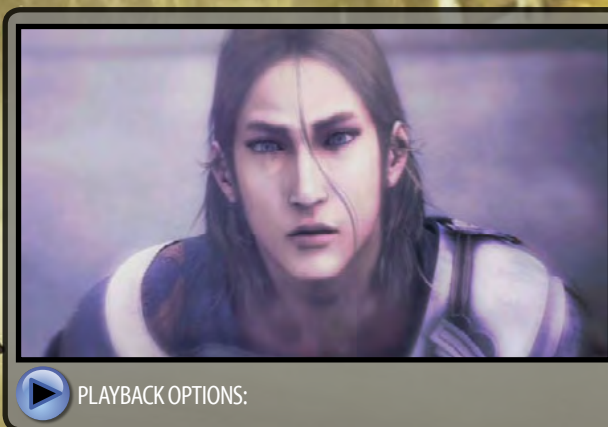
Anything else to declare?

EA is promising a bit of a twist to the standard campaign formula, but isn't revealing what the secret might be. Intrigued? We certainly are.





LOST ODYSSEY™



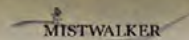
"Fresh, Powerful and Epic"
360 Magazine

1000 years of memories lost. It's time to discover them.

From the famed creator of Final Fantasy, Hironobu Sakaguchi, comes a revolutionary RPG experience rich in depth, emotion and cinematic gameplay. In an age that has harnessed the dark power of magic, you are the mysterious, immortal Kaim – on a quest to reclaim 1,000 years of lost memories. Unlock a past infused with love, betrayal, and war to reveal the path to reclaim your life and rescue the world.



xbox.com/lostodyssey



Out 29th February

0

200

400

600

800

1000 YRS

Jump in.





Publisher: Ubisoft

Developer: Project Soul

Heritage: It's their debut game

Link: <http://www.soularchive.jp/SC4/index.html>

html

ETA: Q3 2008



Besides being a terrific idea, everything we've seen so far suggests that Yoda's appearance has been implemented brilliantly.

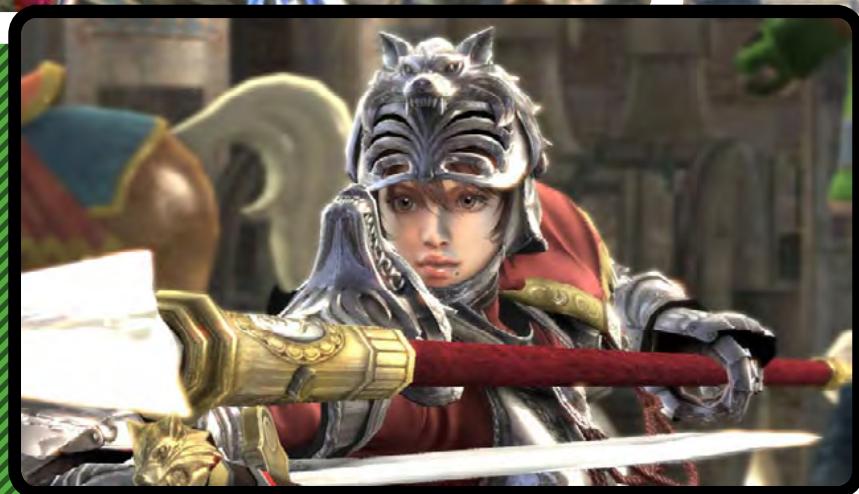
**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to tell us what you think of Soul Calibur IV



"Surprised you are, hm?" Yoda makes for one of the most agile, tough-to-hit opponents in any beat-em-up.



Let's not forget the other characters, though - Raphael looks less foppish this time around, with a piercing stare to match his rapier blade.



"All existing characters have had a serious makeover"

FIRST LOOK

Soul Calibur IV

The force is strong in this one

What's the story?

You're Namco. You've just seen Sega pull off arguably the finest 3D fighter ever with Virtua Fighter 5, and your flagship beat-em-up franchise is up next. What do you do to make everyone sit up and take notice of the latest in the Soul Calibur series?

What do we know?

That's right, you only go and chuck in flipping *Yoda* into the mix as a playable character. Yes, that's right - in perhaps the most jaw-dropping news we've heard so far this year, the Soul Calibur roster is set to be enlivened by the wizened yet sprightly Jedi Knight. As you can see from the pictures, this is something to get very, very excited about. Will Force moves as well as lightsaber slashes be allowed? We

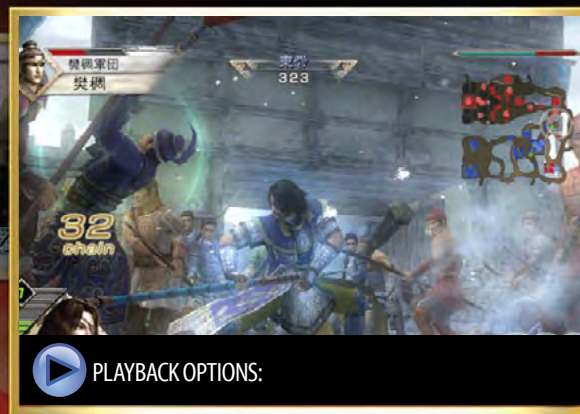
don't know yet, but we sure as hell can't wait to find out...

When do we get more?

Ubisoft are publishing the game in Europe, and we're expected to receive the game in the third quarter of this year. The US and Japan will likely get it in the early summer. Lucky devils.

Anything else to declare?

All existing characters have had a serious makeover, with Astaroth and Voldo in particular looking more evil than ever.



DYNASTY WARRIORS IS REBORN

UTILISING THE FULL POWER
OF NEXT GEN CONSOLES TO CREATE
A WARRIORS EXPERIENCE
LIKE NONE BEFORE

DYNASTY WARRIORS 6

READY FOR BATTLE MARCH 7

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PLAYSTATION 3



XBOX 360 LIVE

Produced by
Omega Force

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CONTROL →





**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Jumper!

FIRST LOOK

Jumper: Griffin's Story

Look before you leap

What's the story?

It's not, as you might suspect, an action-adventure detailing the legendary creature's struggle to find a pullover that fits. Nope, it's a film-tie in to the curiously underhyped Doug Liman sci-fi action flick, set for release this month. Starring Darth Vader and Billy Elliot (aka Hayden Christensen and Jamie Bell), it's the tale of a group of people who are able to teleport instantly wherever they choose.

What do we know?

Curiously, Eidos has chosen to focus on the ballet dancer rather than the Jedi Knight, with Bell's character (the titular Griffin) taking the lead in the game. It's a side plot where Griffin has to bring down those responsible for the murder of his parents - they being a shady organisation trying to rid the world of these pesky 'jumpers'. It's heavy on combat, with Griffin zipping instantly above, below and behind foes to take them out.

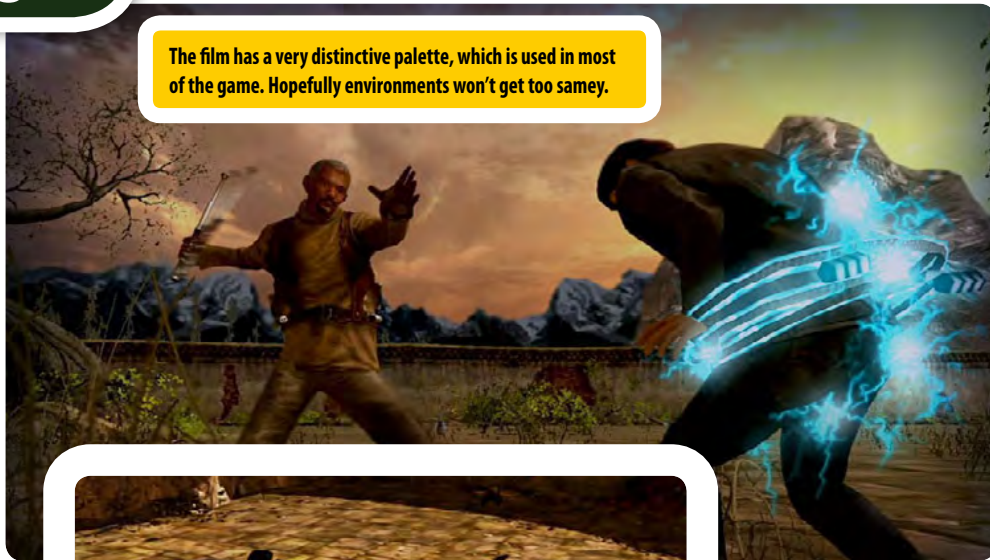
When do we get more?

Much like the characters in the film, this seems to have appeared all of a sudden out of nowhere, and it's due to launch on the 22nd of this month, a week after the film debuts in UK cinemas.

Anything else to declare?

Apparently the Paladins - the antagonists from the game and the film - are able to read when you're going to teleport, making fights a little trickier than just knocking baddies out from behind. Interesting...

The film has a very distinctive palette, which is used in most of the game. Hopefully environments won't get too samey.



Jumps are as much about evading attacks as for offensive manoeuvres of your own.



"A film-tie in to the curiously underhyped Doug Liman sci-fi action flick"



The 'finisher jump' transports your enemy to a chosen location - release them over huge drops, or immediately next to angry beasts. Nice.



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PLAYBACK OPTIONS:



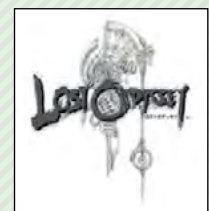
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VEHICLES IN AN OPEN WORLD

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Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios
Developer: Mistwalker
Heritage: Blue Dragon, ASH
Link: <http://www.mistwalker.info/lo.html>
ETA: 29th February

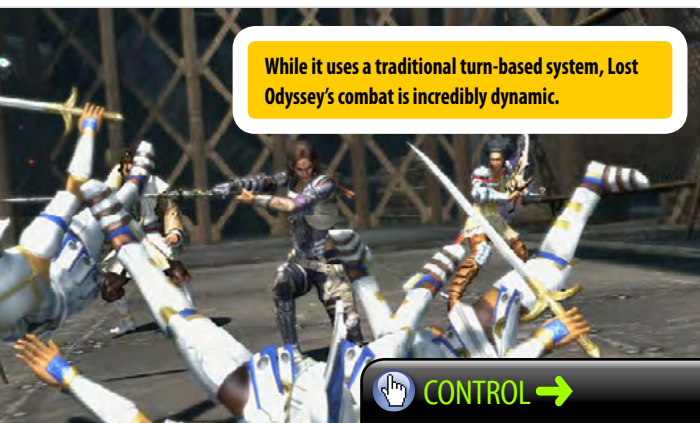
**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Lost Odyssey



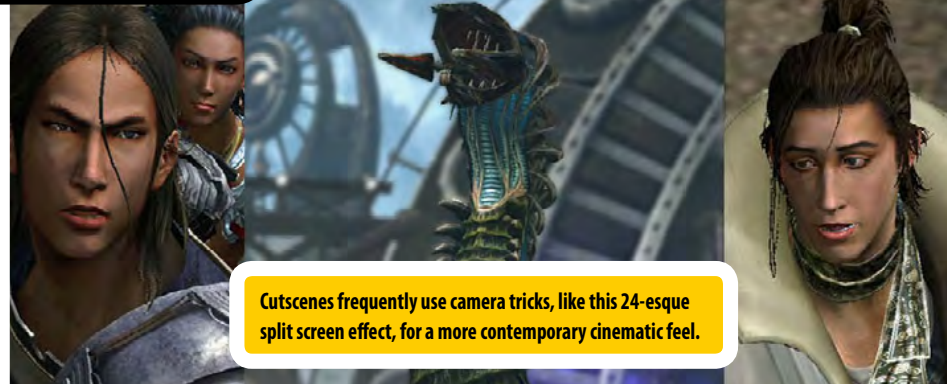
The game's graphics represent a new high for RPGs - it's absolutely stunning.



"It features incredible Unreal-Engine-powered combat sequences"



While it uses a traditional turn-based system, Lost Odyssey's combat is incredibly dynamic.



Cutscenes frequently use camera tricks, like this 24-esque split screen effect, for a more contemporary cinematic feel.

FIRST LOOK

Lost Odyssey

Big in Japan - can it repeat that success over here?

What's the story?

Lost Odyssey was one of Microsoft's biggest plays for the Japanese market. Developer Mistwalker is made up from ex-Square employees under the leadership of Hironobu Sakaguchi, creator of the legendary Final Fantasy series. Though it shifted a fair number of copies considering the 360's poor performance in Japan, it failed to really boost the hardware beyond a brief sales spike.

What do we know?

It's a traditional Japanese role-playing game that's epic with a capital 'E'. It tells the story of Kaim, an immortal warrior who has lived for a thousand years, and you control his journey throughout several generations as he experiences love and war throughout the ages. It sounds ambitious enough, but that's before you factor in the rumoured twenty hours' worth of cutscenes, and incredible Unreal-Engine-powered combat sequences. Despite criticisms of lengthy load times, it garnered an impressive 36/40 score in Japanese gaming bible Famitsu.

When do we get more?

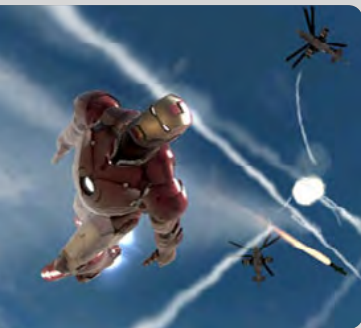
It's here on February 29th. We'll have played it to completion by our next issue, so expect the full 360Zine verdict then.

Anything else to declare?

As with previous Mistwalker game Blue Dragon, composer Nobuo Uematsu is behind the amazing soundtrack. Lost Odyssey was such an undertaking that Sakaguchi brought in a 40-strong outside studio to assist in the production.

INCOMING

A fistful of top new titles coming to 360...



Iron Man

Publisher: Sega | **ETA:** May 2008

Sega recently agreed a 'multi-year deal' with Marvel to produce games based on Iron Man films and comic books, hence this tie-in to the forthcoming Robert Downey Jr. blockbuster. It certainly looks the part - here's hoping it's a little better than Sega's last film licence, The Golden Compass.

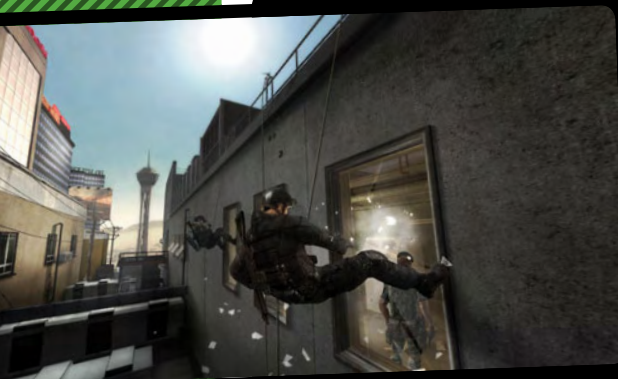


Top Spin 3

Publisher: 2K Games | **ETA:** Spring 2008

The original Top Spin came out of nowhere to become one of the best tennis sims of the last generation. But with Virtua Tennis 3 raising the bar above its lacklustre sequel, can Top Spin regain its crown as the premier current-gen tennis game? We'll find out in a few months.

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to tell
us which games
you're looking
forward to.



Rainbow Six Vegas 2

Publisher: Ubisoft | **ETA:** March 2008

Rather appropriately, given its stealth-based gameplay, this sequel has sneaked up on us, its release mere weeks away. The original looked a little rough around the edges, but played an accomplished game of softly-softly-catchy-terrorist. With a vastly improved co-op mode, this should be more of the same with a bit more polish.

Far Cry 2

Publisher: Ubisoft | **ETA:** Spring 2008

With original developers Crytek now on EA's books, it's been left up to the talented bods at EA Montreal to bring us this desert-set sequel. Eschewing the feral powers - and indeed all the supernatural elements - of the original, this is something grittier, dirtier and altogether more real. Expect more detailed impressions soon.



White Gold: War In Paradise

Publisher: Play Ten | **ETA:** Q2 2008

This latest FPS from Boiling Point developers Deep Shadows has even more ambition than its enjoyable (but criminally bugged) PC debut. It's a shooter with RPG elements, as you find yourself on a Caribbean archipelago in the midst of a violent conflict. With reportedly hundreds of square miles to explore, we just hope the developer hasn't bitten off more than it can chew.

MARCH

● Dynasty Warriors 6 - March 7th

● Football Manager 2008 - March 28th

● Rock Band - Q1 2008

● Bionic Commando: Rearmed - Spring

● NBA Ballers: Chosen One - Spring

● Prototype - Summer

● Universe at War: Earth Assault - March 7th

● Army of Two - Q1 2008

● Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty - Q1 2008

● Don King Presents: Prizefighter - Spring

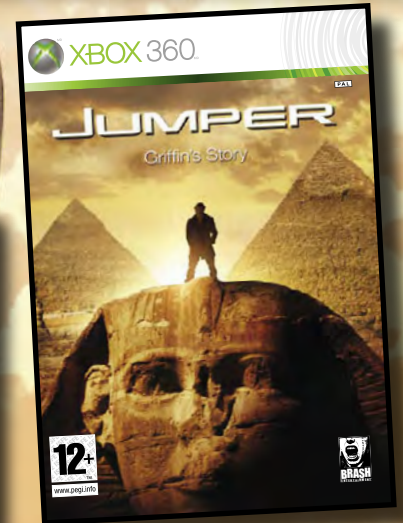
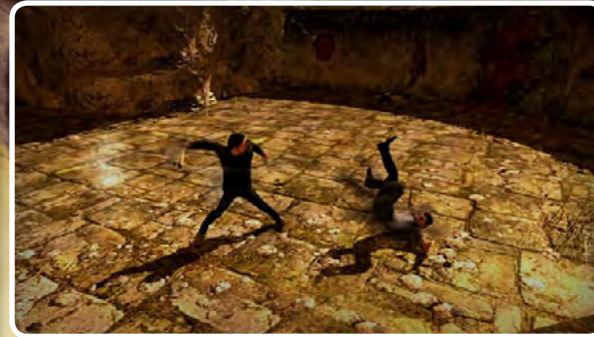
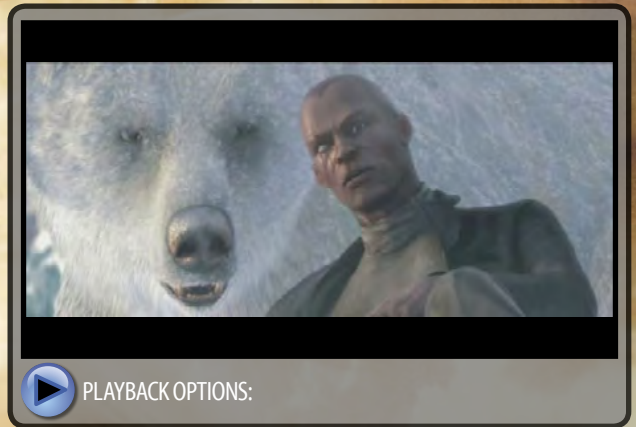
● Beijing 2008 - Summer

● Wall*E - Summer

ANYWHERE IS POSSIBLE

JUMPER

Griffin's Story



12+

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HANDS ON

Conflict: Denied Ops

Are two heads better than four?

The Conflict series has always been a little more cerebral than your average military shooter. It's always been about planning and strategy more than running and gunning. And it's always been about micro-managing a squad of four men. Well, forget everything you know about the Conflict series so far, because Denied Ops is nothing like that.

It might help to know that the original title for the game was Crossfire.

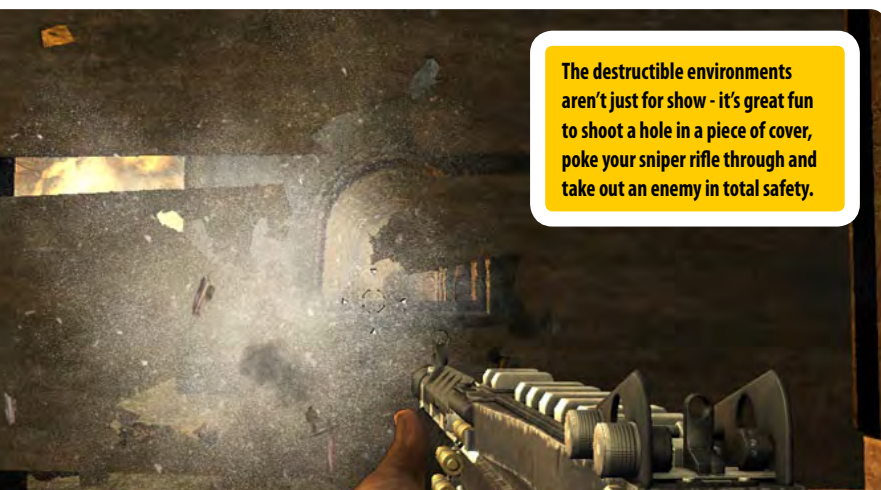
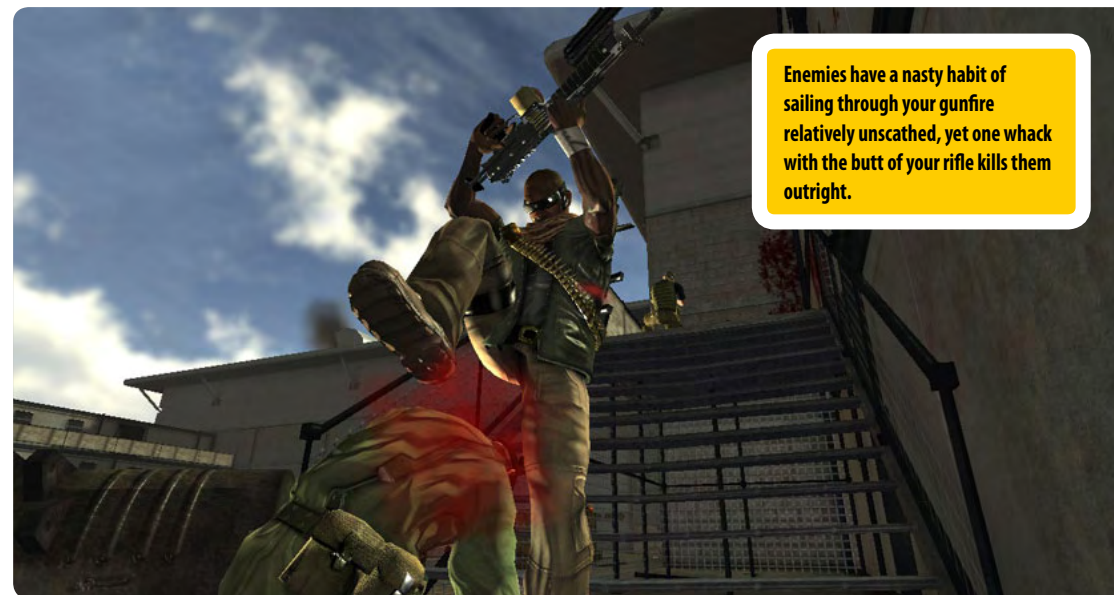
We can only assume that Eidos decided upon the name-change to give it a recognised branding, because otherwise it bears little resemblance to what's gone before. Denied Ops is a first-person shooter which has you swapping between just two characters - sniper Lincoln Graves and heavy weapons hulk Reggie Lang. Much like Eidos' other recent pairing, Kane and Lynch, these two don't like each other very much - which begs the question:

why were they chosen to work together? Old hand Graves refers to Lang as 'Junior', while Lang frequently calls Graves 'redneck' - it's all a little immature, really. Thankfully, this presumed witty banter is kept to a relative minimum, with the two grunting grudging acknowledgements

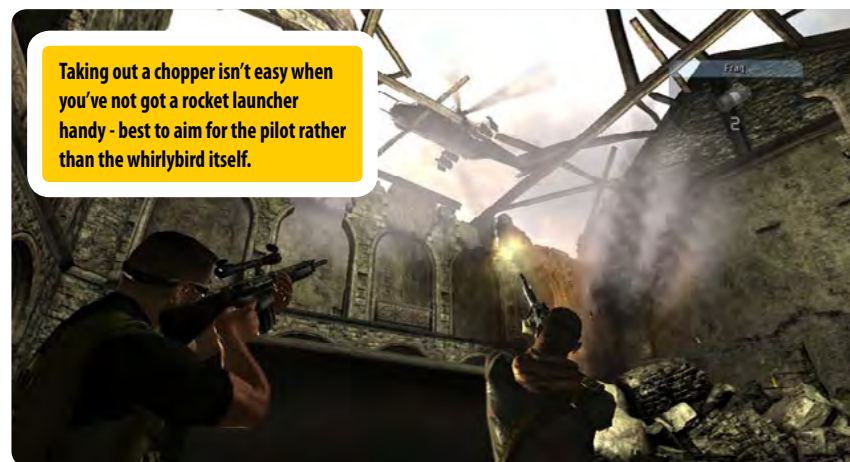
of effective gunplay during combat.

The pair are quite the jet-setting team as their missions take them across the world, from disarming nuclear weapons in a Siberian castle, to storming a chemical tanker in the Atlantic. Initially, Lang and Graves have very different abilities - the former

Enemies have a nasty habit of sailing through your gunfire relatively unscathed, yet one whack with the butt of your rifle kills them outright.



The destructible environments aren't just for show - it's great fun to shoot a hole in a piece of cover, poke your sniper rifle through and take out an enemy in total safety.



Taking out a chopper isn't easy when you've not got a rocket launcher handy - best to aim for the pilot rather than the whirlybird itself.



On the easier difficulties, you can get hit quite a few times before you drop, though on Hard mode you'll be moving much more carefully.



>Denied Ops continued

carries a machine gun for close combat, with the latter's sniper rifle useful for taking out more distant foes. While pressing the left trigger issues context-sensitive commands (a quick pull sends your ally towards your cursor, holding orders them to follow you), you'll often find it best to simply press B and switch between the two. It's not that the AI's particularly bad, but that it's all too easy in the heat of battle to forget you've not been issuing follow commands, and your partner is all the way back at the start of the checkpoint. This is doubly irritating when you've been shot and need reviving - the other player has to come running while a

(fairly generous) timer ticks down to administer an injection of adrenaline. The other problem with just using the one button for orders is that it can take time to select the right option - one mission sees you protecting a scientist, but you need to position the cursor perfectly, otherwise your comrade will simply follow you and leave the poor professor to die.

As you progress, Graves and Lang get weapon upgrades which make swapping less frequent - Graves' shotgun attachment makes him stronger in close quarters, while Lang is equipped with a rocket launcher to take out armoured vehicles and groups of enemies. Environments are impressively destructible, which makes

up for the slightly rough-looking visuals. Enemy AI isn't too impressive, and whilst your team-mate's behaviour is generally sensible, occasionally they'll walk straight into a hail of gunfire - particularly annoying considering the lengthy healing animation, which you may have to perform while still under attack.

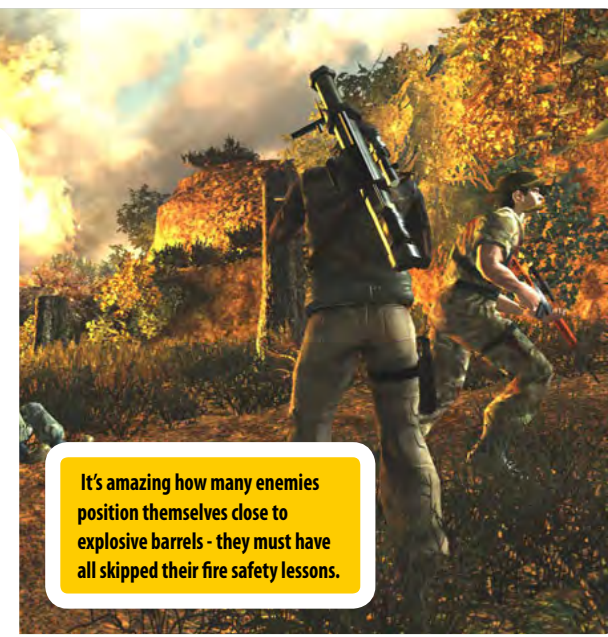
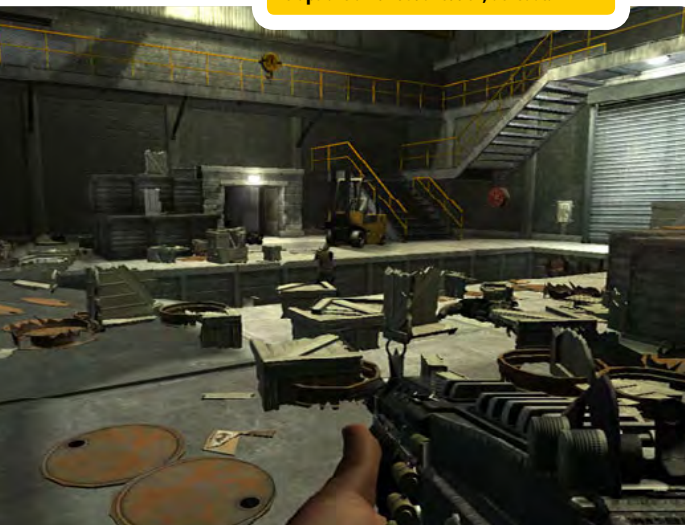
These niggles are frustrating, because otherwise Denied Ops has plenty going for it. Its action is undeniably exciting, there's a definite strategy to getting through the levels on the harder difficulties (on Easy you can soak up plenty of bullets before you fall), and its character-swapping mechanic generally works pretty well. It's a relatively shallow experience



It's never a good idea to shoot your partner, particularly given he spends most of his time complaining about you already.

when compared with the earlier Conflict games, though many gamers will see its accessible nature as a plus. Fingers crossed that Eidos can iron out some of the creases, as otherwise Conflict will be just another military FPS. And for a name with such an impressive heritage, that would be a crying shame. ●

A warehouse level with crates in - how thoroughly original. Though those man traps are an unusual touch, at least.



It's amazing how many enemies position themselves close to explosive barrels - they must have all skipped their fire safety lessons.



HOW COMPLETE?

95%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

75%

Potential problems can't be denied.



LIVE FREE OR DIE

1953, THE NAZI INVASION OF NEW YORK IS COMPLETE.
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
TAKE UP ARMS AND RESIST THIS UNSTOPPABLE AXIS ARMY

TURNING POINT
FALL OF LIBERTY™

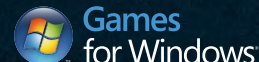


PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

TURNING POINT® FALL OF LIBERTY™

"HATS OFF TO CODEMASTERS...
IT LOOKS CERTAIN
TO BE A WINNER"
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PLAYSTATION 3



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CONTROL →





**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Viking!

Expect plenty of blood to be spilled -
Viking certainly isn't for the squeamish,
with lashings of gore throughout.

HANDS ON

Viking: Battle For Asgard

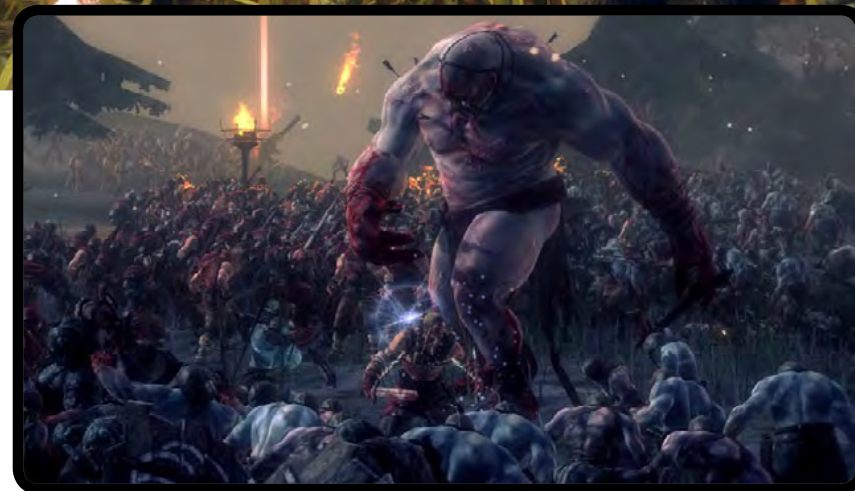
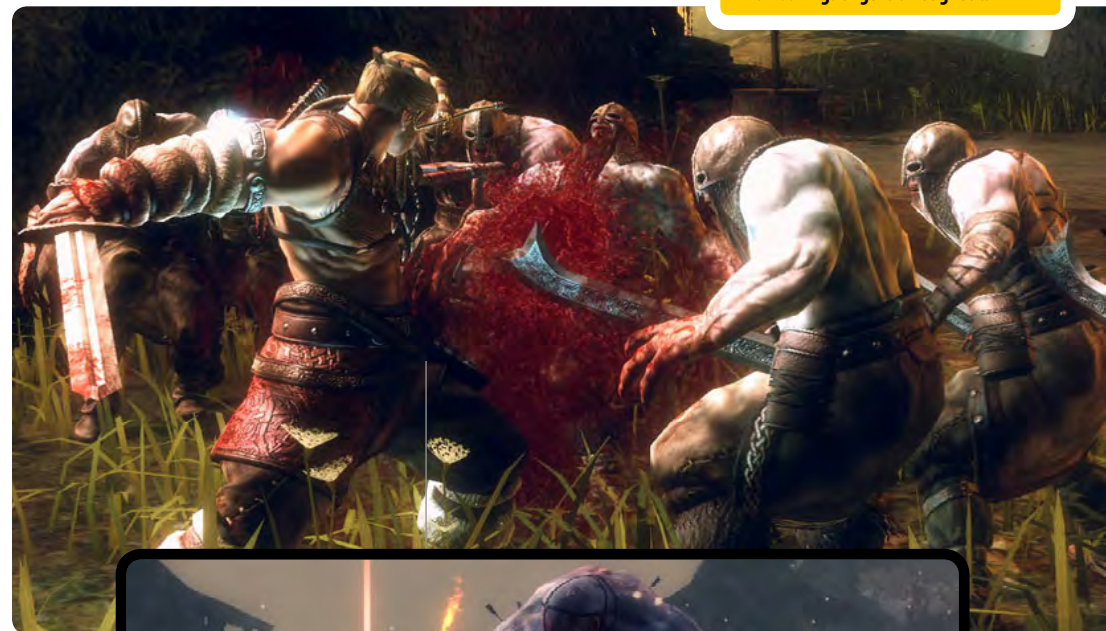
Sega indulges in a little Norse-play

If there's one thing you can rely on with Sussex-based developer The Creative Assembly, it's that they know how to handle themselves in a scrap. As you'd probably expect from the team behind the sublime Total War series on PC, or the hugely underrated

Spartan: Total Warrior from three years back, the battle scenes in their latest are some of the most impressive yet seen on a current-generation console. Shifting hundreds of chunky, detailed warriors around with not even the slightest hint of a stutter, Viking feels closest in spirit to something like a Western Dynasty Warriors, but with a good deal more dismemberment. It's brutal, barbaric and bloody - just as a game featuring such vicious fighters should be.

Rather than controlling a horde of Norse warriors, you play as one Viking, Skarin, who is tasked with destroying a legion of undead, conjured by the goddess Hel after her banishment by the all-powerful Odin. If the story sounds a little like a Norse remake of God of War's plot, then you won't be surprised to hear that Skarin is also a dark, conflicted protagonist, with inner demons, a mysterious past and a lust for blood. Sega is clearly positioning him as a rival to Sony's Kratos, suggesting he's "gaming's next great hero".

Yet while Kratos was fighting a one-man battle against overwhelming



The game's towering protagonist, Skarin. It's unusual to play such a powerful character and yet still feel like you're fighting against the odds.



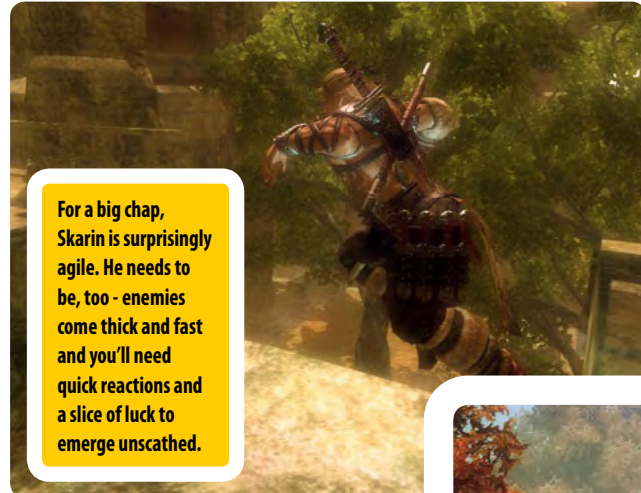


>Viking continued

odds, Skarin has a few allies he can call on for assistance. Tame a dragon, and you can command it to unleash powerful bursts of fire upon your foes. Rescue imprisoned warriors and you can lead them into battle. Skarin's skills will improve as you progress, and this enables you to take a different tack should you so choose - do you cut a swathe through waves of grunts, or target a more significant enemy, and take them down to reduce morale?

The game is essentially split into two - first come the solo missions, where Skarin has to find certain artifacts, destroy enemy strongholds, or recruit men for his army by freeing them from heavily-guarded prisons. Once he's succeeded in his task, the undead hordes will be driven back, and more soldiers will join forces with you. Amass

Skarin's solo missions are many and varied, adding significant longevity to the single-player experience.



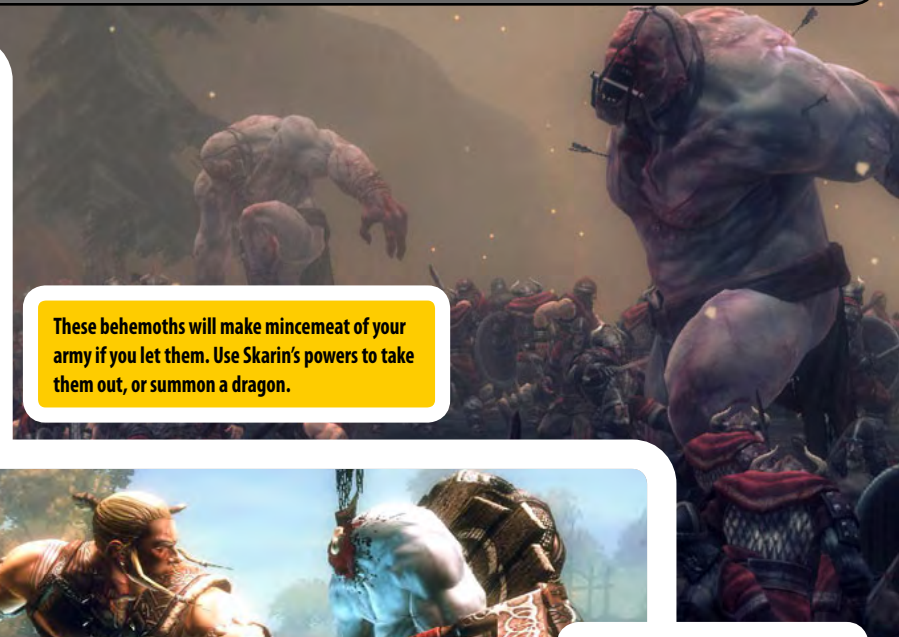
For a big chap, Skarin is surprisingly agile. He needs to be, too - enemies come thick and fast and you'll need quick reactions and a slice of luck to emerge unscathed.

a large enough force and you can engage in battles of epic scale, fighting as a General amidst a sea of smaller melees. It's often best to lead by example - if you see a group of soldiers under heavy attack, then you'll need to wade in and help them out.

It's thrilling stuff, and at a time when videogames are under ever greater scrutiny from the mainstream media, shockingly violent. Eviscerated enemies line the battlefield, while Skarin himself can pull off several limb-lopping combos. All of this gore would be for nothing if the battles didn't feel real, but the artificial intelligence is stunning, further enhancing the illusion that you're in the middle of a ferocious war.

To describe the game as a button-masher would do it a great disservice, as that particular tactic won't get you very far at all. Blocking and dodging is of equal importance in

"The artificial intelligence is stunning"



These behemoths will make mincemeat of your army if you let them. Use Skarin's powers to take them out, or summon a dragon.



Decapitations are not uncommon - we hope Viking doesn't fall foul of the censor, though its rather fantastical approach to violence should help it.

battle, while concerns about repetitive gameplay are also wide of the mark, given the variety of Skarin's solo quests. It remains to be seen whether these elements can gel together into a cohesive whole, but we're confident Viking can be an action epic to rival the very best games on 360. ●



360Zine
Viking

HOW COMPLETE?
90%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS
88%

Sega's gory epic looks Viking brilliant.

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the elements

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TURNING POINT: FALL OF LIBERTY

Codemasters' *Turning Point: Fall of Liberty* takes an intriguing potential scenario - what if Winston Churchill's famous 1931 car accident was fatal? - and rewrites the events of World War II accordingly, with Nazis occupying Europe and attempting to take control of the USA. We spoke to senior producer **Dave Brickley** about this fascinating new FPS...



It's a fantastic concept, which must have been tricky to realise, given both the need for realism but also to create a very different looking version of 50's America. How have you managed to marry these two elements?

The realism came from the team's experience working on games that featured World War II as a backdrop because along the way they learned so much about what was about to happen as well as what actually happened - Hitler's obsession with conquering America for example, and the weapons and machinery that the

Nazi scientists were ready to put into operation. The chance to make that alternate history come to life was just too good to pass up. The challenge was not to go over the top - from 1931 when Churchill dies to the invasion in 1953, we're talking 20 years of development from what we knew, so no laser guns, no robot Nazis, but jet planes, long-range attack blimps and infra red were totally plausible - it had to stay believable. Everything's an evolution.

Setting it in the 50s was as much about the style of the visuals as creating an image that was historical yet fictional. There are



The changing colour palette for each stage is a beautifully subtle touch that makes the levels look suitably different.

Post 9/11, the Nazi invasion of America feels uncomfortably real. It's quite an unnerving experience for the player.





If you're a fan of the film Armageddon, then seeing the Chrysler building destroyed is nothing new. It seems quite a popular target!



It's not yet clear whether Turning Point will take political potshots or indulge in satire, but the Nazi regalia draped around the White House is an iconic image.



> Interview continued

influences from the movies - the palette will veer between Sky Captain, high colour images for the opening surprise dawn attack to washed out, gritty, Private Ryan-esque on the later levels as the Nazis take total control. It's a contrast we think works really well, the levels are very distinct as a result.

Did the concept come about purely to try and distance the game from all the other WWII shooters on the market? Or was it simply a case of wanting to explore the 'what if' scenario?

We don't really think of it as a WWII shooter. It's as much War of the Worlds as it is WWII. You're not the conquering hero. You're not on a beach in France. You're a civilian, in Manhattan, on the day America is utterly dominated by the Nazi war machine. You'll spend the rest of the game fleeing for your life, helping a fledgling resistance, and basically becoming a terrorist.

Presumably one of the key differences, other than the setting, will be more advanced weaponry - can you tell

"It's as much War of the Worlds as it is WWII"

us a little about what to expect from the new weapons?

Again, we've avoided going too sci fi. Everything is a subtle evolution of what existed in the period, or was on the drawing board. Of course the Nazis get all the cool stuff! You basically start with some weapons you acquire from the local hoods because the army wasn't prepared for the attack. But along the way you'll acquire some of the Nazi's armoury for a little payback. >



Though you'll see plenty of soldiers in their combat gear, this is far removed from your average WWII shooter.



Everything we've seen so far suggests developer Spark Unlimited has done justice to the concept. Fingers crossed it lives up to expectations.

Finding cover is a key part of the game.



> Interview continued

You can also use your hands, or the environment, to kill someone. Ammunition is in short supply, you have to take desperate measures to move from cover to cover.

Do you think you'll get any flak for the potentially controversial subject matter? Does the game intentionally draw parallels between the Nazis attacking the US and the events of 9/11, for example?

In as much as the team, as American citizens, were forced to sit and think about a new age in which they're no

longer 'safe' in their own country then yes, there was a direct inspiration from the events of that day. But it's an artistic response to those feelings, and we think setting it so long in the past was the right decision in terms of showing sensitivity.

It must have been quite a coup to get award-winning Lost and Alias composer Michael Giacchino on board - what exactly does his soundtrack bring to the Turning Point experience?

He's been a long-standing collaborator of the team in their previous guises. It's a remarkable soundtrack, he really got into the idea that you are not the hero who saves the day, so there's no brass in the score at all - no trumpets, no fanfare. There's nothing to celebrate.

Finally, what one single element of Turning Point do you think is the most important?

The realization of the setting. Its great to have a concept people just 'get' but to have had it come together in such an epic fashion is something to be proud of. ●

"The chance to make that alternate history come to life was just too good to pass up."

TURNING POINT
FALL OF LIBERTY

Publisher: Codemasters

Developer: Spark
Unlimited

Heritage: Call of Duty:
Finest Hour

Link: www.codemasters.co.uk/turningpoint

ETA: March 2008

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CONTROL →





Beautiful Katamari

Roll up, roll up... for the weirdest game on Xbox 360!

If you're one of the few people fortunate enough to have played 2006's *We Love Katamari*, then you'll know exactly what *Beautiful Katamari* is all about. If you're one of the even fewer people to have experienced the import-only original, then you'll have an even better idea - *Beautiful Katamari* is closer to the first game in spirit than the sequel. It's basically *Katamari* in HD, and by now you'll already know if you want it or not.

If, however, you're a newcomer to *Katamari* then you're probably wondering what on earth is going on in the screenshots scattered about these pages. Quite understandably, too - in truth, this

paragraph is probably going to put off more people than it excites. But stick with us - we promise it's worth it...

The story goes that the King of all Cosmos, a giant moustachioed chap with a head like a Christmas cracker, has created a giant black hole in the Milky Way with a particularly enthusiastic tennis shot. With all planets except Earth sucked into the void, it's up to his son the Prince to restore each planet. This is done by collecting various items by rolling over them with a sticky ball called a Katamari. The Katamari is controlled by both analogue sticks - nudge them upwards simultaneously and the Prince will push the ball forward, while

"It's awe-inspiring when you start rolling across the surface of the Earth"

While it won't be long before you reach the finish, it'll take quite some time to pick up 100% of items in every category.



As your Katamari gets more angular, it becomes much more difficult to roll in a straight line.

FREEZE FRAME

Time to get on a roll...



5 MINUTES

Simply exploring the hub is a delight in itself, as the Prince's cousins potter around aimlessly.



30 MINUTES

It's a tough job to recreate the planets, but somebody has to do it.



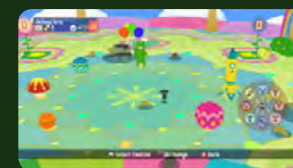
2 HOURS

It's not always that simple. Fail a level, and the King shoots pool balls at you!



4 HOURS

Taking over the world, one country at a time. Time to plug that hole in the universe.



7 HOURS

Visit an online planet to set up a multiplayer game - though it's a little lonely at present.





> Katamari continued

tilting both to the same side will move it in that direction. Where it gets more complicated is when you need to change direction - here, to move the Prince around the Katamari, you tilt the sticks in opposite directions to each other, while quickly flicking them up and down alternately performs a dash. It might sound complicated, but after a few minutes it feels amazingly intuitive, and you'll soon be manoeuvring through the narrowest of gaps.

The Katamari increases in size as you go - so you start off by rolling up buttons and pencils, and eventually end up with people, cars, buildings...even countries attached like glue. It's quite something to start off being dwarfed by pieces of furniture and mere minutes later, rolling over the house that contains them all. As you reach the later stages, it's both empowering and amusing to hear people shrieking as this giant ball of detritus chases them down the street, and genuinely awe-inspiring when you start rolling across the surface of the Earth, seeing gigantic land masses pulled from the ocean and onto your Katamari.

While each mission takes place over the same environments, you'll explore different areas in each stage, and the

items you pick up change from level to level. The King will request specific items for the disparate planets, so for Saturn you need to pick up as many ringed items as possible, while Pluto requires cool stuff - all to reach a certain size within a given time limit. A few stages vary the standard template, with Mars needing only hot items (so avoid

the snowmen and ice cream trucks) to reach a specific temperature, and Uranus seeing you picking up objects of a certain type at the King's whim.

Much of Beautiful Katamari's appeal comes from its wacky sense of humour - the King's furious vengeance at a failed task sees him shooting gigantic pool balls at you, while his sniffy



"Much of the appeal comes from its wacky sense of humour"



A LOAD OF RUBBISH

Because that's all a Katamari is, really...



Items

Big is best

Buffoon

Items

After a short while you know instinctively whether your Katamari is big enough to pick up an item or not, and your progress will be much quicker. We thought these 360 controllers would add to our 'cool' collection for Pluto, but unfortunately the King actually meant cold. Ah well.



Nothing like a bit of product placement - perhaps all these consoles suffered the dreaded Red Ring Of Death.

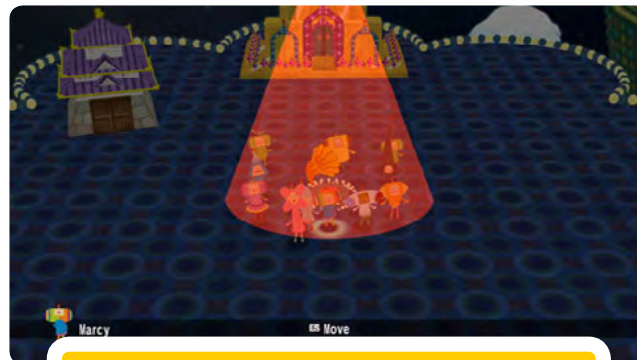


The graphics aren't anything particularly special, though they're full of charm. And unlike the PS2 game there's no breaks for loading.





In the first minute of a level, it takes thirty seconds to gain a few centimetres. Later on, you'll gain several metres or even kilometres in the same time.



The hub is full of neat little touches - stand near the gramophone (later a jukebox) and all the cousins will gather to do a little dance.



You've earned yourself another story. We think.



About to fall spectacularly short of the target size - it's amazing how guilty the King's admonishment makes you feel.

"Beautiful Katamari is something deliciously different"

> Katamari continued

appraisals of your performance are genuinely amusing. It's not a long game - you can see the credits within four hours - though its replay value is exceptional, with so many collectibles and secrets to find. Collecting presents and the Prince's cousins secreted around each stage is compulsive, while beating your best scores is an addictive challenge, particularly given how tough it is to win the King's praise. Multiplayer is a fun diversion that somehow lacks the same allure of the solo game, but who wouldn't want to contribute towards the size of the giant cow representing the combined size of every Live user's Katamari?

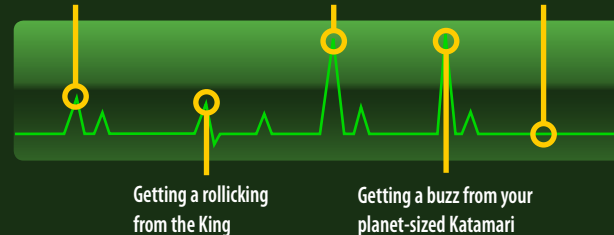
We fully expect most readers to still be totally nonplussed, but we urge you to give Beautiful Katamari a chance. It's the kind of game that appeals to both casual and hardcore players for very different reasons - one group for its accessible, friendly approach, and the other to unlock its

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

Getting the hang of the controls

Getting bigger and bigger with every stage

Getting over the fact it's finished



toughest achievements. And for anyone slightly jaded of the same old shooting and driving games, then Katamari is something deliciously different that deserves any and all attention it gets. ● **Chris Schilling**



360Zine Verdict

Short but sweet - Katamari is a rolling wonder.

- Wonderfully wacky
- Funny, frantic and completely joyous
- Short lived; familiar for Katamari fans

84%



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The Club

Born to run and gun.

This one's simultaneously very easy and quite tricky to explain. Let's take the former option first. Imagine what a third-person shooter would be like if was put together by a team who have all the racing-game experience in the world. That's the Club.

It's not quite true to say Project Gotham veterans Bizarre Creations are inexperienced in things shooty - the cult Dreamcast game Fur Fighters sits in their history, alongside the definitive

It's possible to shoot through the viewer on the shields. As you should.

XBox Live classic Geometry Wars - but much of this reinvention of the shooter tickles the same parts of the gaming mind as a racer. That is, shorter levels designed to be played many times, a constant sense of velocity and the optimum way of playing based around memorising a course and hitting the exact points /exactly/.

All this gunplay is justified by a cursory plot based around the

eponymous Club, bringing various men of shootage together to kill each other to entertain the phenomenally rich and powerful club membership. In other words, it's not actually about killing effectively - it's about killing spectacularly. The best contestant is the one who plays to the tastes of the Club - and they like tricky shots and not too long between someone being turned from trained killer to meat.

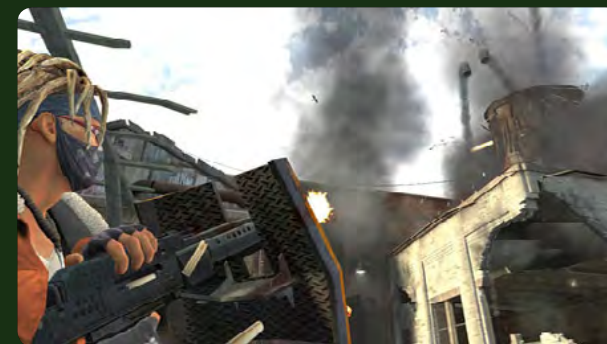
This works in-game by the scoring system - you're playing to maximise the score. Hard shots give more points, but the key is actually increasing the combo multiplier. Every time someone goes down, it goes up by one. Then you've got a limited time to kill the next one - or shoot one of the combo-boosting skull-signs - or the combo starts "bleeding" away. Making your way around the course - most levels are over in a handful of minutes -

The gents who hide behind a shield are frankly just delaying the inevitable.

"It's not actually about killing effectively... it's about killing spectacularly"

CLUB RULES

8th rule: If this is your first night at The Club, you have to fight.



Tips

Tricks

Tactics

Tips

You need to change your assumptions to play The Club well. Take the popular standard turrets - while powerful, in many cases, they're just going to slow you down. Arguably your manoeuvrability is a stronger thing to maintain.

Explosions feature prominently.





> The Club continued

optimum play is achieved by pacing the slaughter so it never drops. So, if you know there's a long corridor to run down, you wait until the combo is starting to leech away before pulling the trigger on the target. As you learn the courses, and polish your gunplay, your scores get Pinball-table high.

Variety's added by the eight settings - from picturesque Venice, to abandoned cruise-ships, Warzones and bunkers - with the addition of game modes. While some are the simple get through the course with a high score, others add a time limit - killing people buys you more precious seconds... or you might need to loop around a number of times... or tackle a tight siege with you having to stay inside a chalk-marked area and kill all-comers for a time-limit. Clearly, if you break any rules,

People with real guns don't get in situations like this very often. I wonder why.



"Arcade thrills with complicated on the fly decisions"

better by microexplosives. There's also more than a splash of the 1-on-1 fighter, with the eight characters with differing attributes plus their own end-movie which plays upon winning a tournament.

And when it's going full guns, it's compelling. Managing to nail a sequence, and keep that combo

microexplosives blow you apart. Everything is made

climbing ever-higher provides both arcade thrills while requiring you to make fairly complicated on the fly decisions. However, its strength is simultaneously, if not its undoing, certainly what stops it from sitting among the best shooters on the 360. It's primarily a game of memorisation, with more in common with Time Crisis than the Halos of the world. While there's a satisfaction to learning a course - and it's telling that we do keep

on calling it courses rather than missions or levels - it's a static thing. There's an optimum route through the game, and you're just trying to keep it in your head. What makes Halo so hailed is how the battles play out differently every time. This is completely the opposite of that - and while that has its appeal, it's a smaller one.

There's other problems with the approach. The levels are packed



LIKE THE A TEAM, BUT MEAN

Meet the members...



DRAGOV

Dragov is the traditional strong-but-slow character, and also clearly happy to conform to national stereotypes with his lovely hat.



SEAGAR

Seagar's decided that snowboarding down vertical cliffs (or whatever) doesn't do it for him anymore, so starts killing for fun. There's a moral here.



NEMO

This is Nemo, who you'll find after completing all eight zones. But he's not a cute fish. He's a nutter.



RENWICK

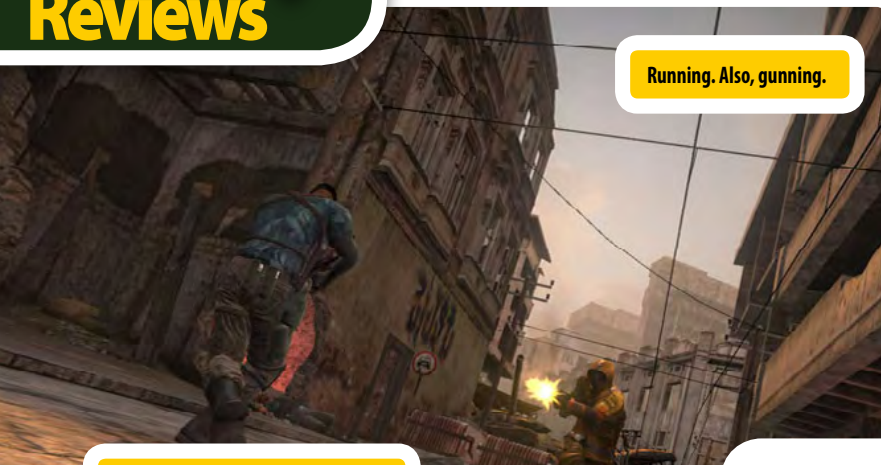
This is the back of Renwick's head, who fills the incredibly hard shaven-head black gentleman role with aplomb. He's an ex-police-officer.



ADJO

This gentlemen is Adjo, who's a Nigerian. He's joins Dragov in the strong-but-slow category. Which is good work, if you can get it.

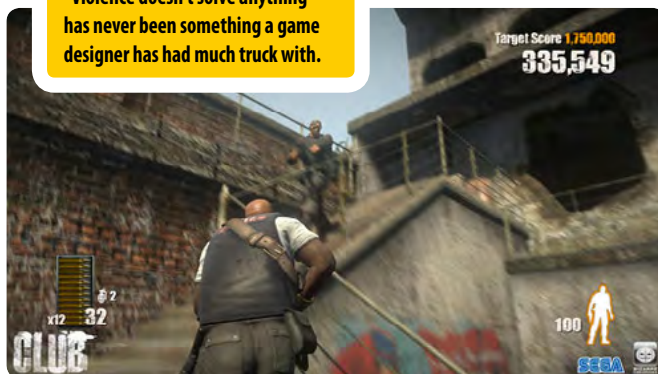




Running. Also, gunning.



If you haven't realised, The Club isn't exactly big on realism.



"Violence doesn't solve anything" has never been something a game designer has had much truck with.



If I had a minigun, that's exactly what I'd do.

"It has more in common with Time Crisis than the Halos of the world"

> The Club continued

with secrets, like hidden skull-signs that allow you to optimise that combo. While you'll hit many of them in normal play, there's at least as many hidden in corners... and if you stop to explore, you're sacrificing that hard earned combo bonus. In other words, you don't get to be best by playing the game and trying to win - you get to be best by /not/ playing the game, and throwing away your score. The grimy graphic style doesn't help either, with the course directions and enemies

occasionally being disguised in the murk - and, of course, losing that for a few seconds is absolutely fatal. Finally, while there's a mass of multiplayer modes - both split screen, on Live or over System links, including ones where you use the same scoring system as the mother game, there's nothing which involves players shooting a mass of goons in a co-operative fashion (but competitively for scores). When that's the heart of the game, choosing a more traditional

multiplayer approach is a little disappointing.

But that's the one area where it doesn't follow its concept to the logical conclusion. The Club's central idea leads to a shooter that simply doesn't feel like anything else. If re-introducing points-chasing to the modern shooter sounds appealing to you, then there's much to be said for applying for membership. ●

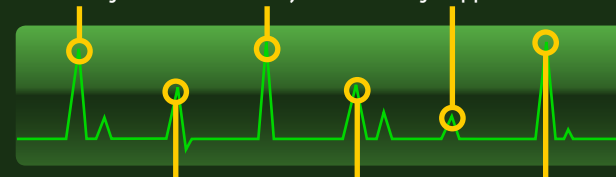
Kieron Gillen

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

I am running and shooting

Hang on, I've worked out this combo system

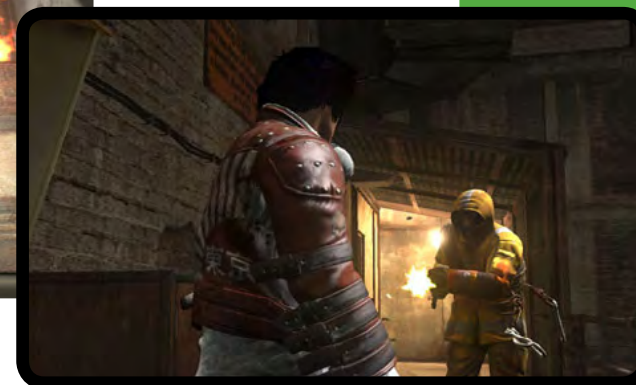
Yeah, I still can't get top place.



I am still running and shooting

Except that my score's not good enough.

Ooh! I've actually won! WINNAH!



360Zine Verdict

On your marks. Set. Go and shoot them all.



Original



Fast moving



Over-grungy graphics

75%

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Xbox Live Arcade Round-Up

As the XBLA has its 100th release, we tell you what's worth your cash, and what to avoid.



Boogie Bunnies

Developer: Artech Studios Publisher: Sierra Online Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

With a graphical style that's sure to have your girlfriend hooked, beneath its cutesy surface, Boogie Bunnies is an addictive puzzler, with a "revolutionary" mechanic. While the basic formula of the game requires you to match three bunnies of the same colour, then watch as they explode/fall over, the twist here comes that you can do it from either the left, right, or bottom of the screen. While this may not seem all that fantastic, it actually makes the

gameplay a lot deeper, and forces you to think differently about your bunny bowling.

Cutesy, colourful, and actually quite cool, this one's beauty is more than skin deep.

- Great gameplay
- Cute appeal
- Local + XBL multiplayer

More disco than raving.

87%

Omega Five

Developer: Natsume Publisher: Hudson Entertainment Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

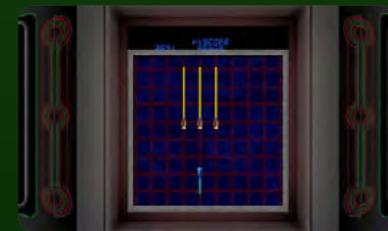
Sticking firmly to the format of scrolling shooters like R-Type, or Ikaruga, Omega Five is a twin-stick shooter that, while it doesn't do anything special, is actually quite a lot of fun to play. With graphics to die for, and a three-type weapon system adding a lot to the depth, Omega Five is one of the better looking games on the Xbox Live Arcade, but is as hard as it is pretty. Even in two-player co-op, this is a game that'll have you tearing your hair out, and we'd bet that most gamers will never see the finish.



- Graphically great
- Co-op
- Far, far too hard

Two players, two sticks, too

80%



Tron

Developer: Backbone Entertainment Publisher: Disney Interactive Studios Price: 400 MP (~£3.40)

A bit of a strange one, this. A collection of mini-games, Tron is a port of the 1982 arcade machine based on the classic film of the same name, and, as you may imagine, the majority of the games are a bit simplistic to say the least. With awkward controls marring the majority of the games, the only real standout here is the light cycle mode, which provides almost the sole reason for buying the game. With a variety of split-screen modes thrown in, this may be worth it if you're desperate for some local co-op.

- Light cycles
- Everything else is awful
- Dreadful controls

A "bit" rubbish

66%

Tempest

Developer: Stainless Games Publisher: Atari Price: 400 MP (~£3.40)

A true classic, Tempest is one of those games that's so eminently playable you can lose yourself in it for hours. With the simplest of mechanics, you pilot a ship around the outside of a variety of tube like courses, shooting the enemies as they come up towards you, and dodging their bullets. Thanks to the strange perspective, this makes the gameplay incredibly challenging, and as a welcome change, the redux graphics actually add to the effect, whilst keeping to the feel of the original. One of the better shooters on the arcade, this is worth a look.



- Vector Graphics FTW
- Addictive gameplay
- Great price

Get caught in the wind

83%

In 360Zine Issue 16

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

Army Of Two



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ROCK BAND
DEVIL MAY CRY 4
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